

**Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**NewTyme School
7692 South Maple Street
P.O. Box 205
Midvale, Utah 84047**

May 11, 2005



Utah State Office of Education
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Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**NewTyme School
7692 South Maple Street
P.O. Box 205
Midvale, Utah 84047**

May 11, 2005

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, May 11, 2005, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of NewTyme School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Vanae Morris is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at NewTyme School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at NewTyme School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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1/3/2005

NEWTYME SCHOOL

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Vanae E. Morris Principal and Co-founder
Alexander C. Morris President and Co-founder

Faculty and Staff

Terri Gardner English Teacher
Kay Johnson..... Elementary Teacher
Hyrum Sessions Parent and Support Volunteer
Ryan Gardner Support Volunteer
Jeff Johnson Support Volunteer

NEWTYME SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

To encourage and inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, to care, and to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, values, and vision needed to reach their potential for lifelong success.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe that...

1. We need to ensure each student has a positive learning environment. This allows for enhancement of self-esteem and fosters fellowship among students, teachers, administrator and parents, so that our students want to be here.
2. We need to enhance the opportunity for personal teacher/student interchange. This allows students to apply their own questioning process and the knowledge gained will stay with the student longer after leaving school.
3. We need to provide small classes and student to teacher ratio to help maintain the high quality results pertaining to independence of work habits and skills necessary for developmentally appropriate academic growth.
4. We need to encourage parents to be their child's first teacher in partnership with the school by increasing school educational focus with a shorter day, thus increasing the influence and time spent with parents, family, and peers.
5. We are a caring, professional, competent, and creative staff who strives to improve all aspects of a students' life by ensuring an innovative, integrated, and dynamic curriculum.
6. We offer a program that is geared toward helping a student develop habits of observation, questioning, and listening. In doing so, this helps the students have an awareness of their own feelings through various means of expression and choices, and realize each choice has a consequence. We accomplish this by offering an academic support class.
7. We need to encourage responsibility for self-learning to help our students become lifelong learners.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Andrew Odoardi, Accreditation Consultant, Visiting Team Chairperson

Georgia Loutensock, Education Specialist, Accreditation, Utah State Office of
Education

VISITING TEAM REPORT

NEW TYME SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

NewTyme School was developed and founded specifically for students best suited for a low teacher-student ratio, working in a personally designed, structured learning environment. NewTyme School services students who are unable to achieve at a large mainstream school. The school provides a family setting—small groups in which each student receives individualized attention. NewTyme School provides students access to a complete education. Each student may advance as quickly as he or she chooses while receiving all of the required subjects.

NewTyme School was founded in May 1980, with the high school was added in 1994. The first graduating class of NewTyme High School was in June of 1999.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The survey analysis and other data collected indicate that the NewTyme School stakeholders (students, parents, and faculty) are generally satisfied with the school and the direction it is taking.

b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

It is recommended that the profile address and include more specific data about staffing as linked to enrollment patterns and students' needs.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The school has come to a valid conclusion as to what data would be of importance for the future and as a guide to program development.
- The Visiting Team agrees with the school's assessment that "The analysis of our data has led us to some questions we have about our school. For example, will the CGPA increase when the students start here in ninth grade instead of coming from other schools? This is something that we would like to track for the future."

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

Teachers and parents reported and evidenced the opportunity to collaborate in the development of the self-study report. Guidelines and procedures for teachers, administrators, students, parents, and support staff are clearly in place and serve to engage the community in the self-study process. It is the intent of the administration to continue with the focus groups as the vehicle for ongoing school improvement.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The self-study is frank and honest in its assessment of what the school should be doing and what was actually happening. The self-study is seen as a positive way to conduct ongoing evaluation of the school's efforts.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

New Tyme School's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

- Students will develop **responsibility** during their school years with the eventual goal of graduating from high school and moving on with their lives in order to become successful at what they choose, become **productive members of the working community**, and feel good about themselves and their accomplishments. As they develop responsibility, they will understand that *success is up to me*. Students will be prepared for real-life situations, including the ability to dress appropriately.
- Students will be able to **collaborate** with others in the school community and feel and be a part of the process along with the parents and community. In this process they will develop a respect for themselves and then for others.
- Students will be able to develop **complex thinking skills** and learn to use them as needed in diverse situations including:
 - Looking beyond the plot and reading between the lines
 - Looking at a situation, assignment, or task and determining what needs to be accomplished

- Being able to understand how to problem solve using the tools available and what tools are needed to solve the problem
- Students will be able to **communicate effectively** both verbally and using the written word. Students will develop the skills to enable them to *think on their feet*.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

The initial process of defining a shared vision statement began in 1998, when the faculty members requested further clarification on the philosophy of the founders. The faculty members at that time brainstormed and dialogued, then wrote, with information from the founder, a mission statement that met the philosophy of the school and the needs of the students, parents, and faculty members. This mission statement has been reviewed and updated, if needed, each subsequent year.

During the initial process of refining the mission statement and belief statements, starting with the school year of 2002-2003, a consensus-building process was established that involved students and faculty.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The statement of beliefs demonstrates a clearly defined commitment to support student achievement and success. It is also aligned with the rationale for the founding of the school, and drives the work of the school on behalf of student learning.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The school's mission and beliefs clearly align in support of the desired results for student learning. Again, the links to the rationale for the founding of the school are evident in the implementation of the mission, beliefs, and desired results for student learning.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The alignment of the course offerings at NewTyme School with the State Core Curriculum and national standards has been in effect since the school was founded. Adherence to the Utah State Core Curriculum guides the curriculum for the school.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The alignment of NewTyme School's curriculum and instructional strategies with the desired results for student learning is well into the emergent phase of development. The school will need to continue to bring staff members along as they are hired and as the current staff members achieve different levels of competence.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

The learning experiences available and utilized are tailored for individual student needs and learning styles. In visiting with the students, the Visiting Team found that teachers use a variety of assessments—from simple worksheets and paper/pencil tests to oral tests, demonstrations, role-playing, and collections of students' work into portfolio-type assessments.

During the one-day visit, a variety of instructional practices were observed; teachers were giving tests, students were working in small groups, hands-on activities were widely used, information was delivered by direct instruction, and students were completing worksheets and engaged in cooperative learning strategies. Students had attained a good grasp of how to utilize technology in the design and presentation of projects and assignments.

Several students were interviewed by the Visiting Team. They reported that, as they go through the school day, they experience a variety of teaching strategies. The Visiting Team has observed the faculty to be dedicated, hardworking, and committed to students' success. Designing alternative ways of assessing student work, especially as it relates to the DRSLs, will enhance student engagement and achievement.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

The staff at NewTyme School utilizes inclusionary teaching practices as the basic strategy to meet the needs of all students. There is no separation of classes for gifted, resource, ESL, or other special educational needs, as each student has a place in the classroom. Small class sizes provide the teachers with the opportunity to meet the needs of individual students.

These strategies include, but are not limited to, collaborative learning, computer-aided instruction, direct (or expository) teaching, indirect teaching, mastery learning, peer tutoring, field trips, and discussion groups.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

NewTyme School indicates that it has “limited but sufficient” additional support for the students outside of the classroom. Teachers encourage the students to seek assistance during the teacher’s planning periods, and before and after the regular school day. In addition, students who need extra assistance are encouraged to enroll in an academic support class that has a teacher available to provide the needed assistance.

Students are able to access and utilize technology on a regular basis. Each classroom has a computer, television, VCR/DVD, overheads, and calculators. The science classrooms also have microscopes. Students can access the Internet through a wireless school network to do research, as well as type and format all papers and other assignments (i.e., PowerPoint and Excel).

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The Visiting Team found that the school uses a variety of assessments to monitor student achievement and adjust instructional practices. Diagnostic tests are administered to new students to determine placement, and a student-produced portfolio is assembled as the year progresses for both the student and teacher to assess overall progress. A computer grade book program is used to generate progress reports and final report cards, in addition to the portfolio to report progress to the parents. Standardized tests are available for teachers to use if they feel there is a need.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

The use of portfolios for assessment is designed to promote student achievement and continuous improvement of student learning. The teachers are learning to design their lesson plans, evaluation methods, and assessments according to the NewTyme DRSLs in order to reach the goals they have set for the students.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Grading and assessment are based on the ability to adequately inform the school's students of their progress and what they need to do in order to succeed. Students participate in the portfolio selections, and teachers use rubrics to help guide the students through the portfolio selection and improvement process.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The staff and administration project a positive attitude toward learning. Teachers and administrators work in a close relationship with students. The low student-teacher ratio (15:1) enables many staff members to interact with students throughout the day. The Visiting Team did not observe students who were uninvolved or "detached" from the school.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

Teachers, administrators, and staff members frequently use testing, assignments, and performance criteria to evaluate students. Decisions about the appropriate strategies and curricula for students are based on collaboration and the best data available.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

Student performance is closely monitored and used to inform subsequent instructional strategies. Measuring student achievement is a comprehensive activity with each teacher and the principal.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

The school's effort to survive in spite of small enrollment numbers precludes the skillful stewardship of resources and organizing resources to meet the variety of student needs. The administration and the teachers have done a remarkable job of turning a rather uninspiring large room into a pleasant learning environment.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

Resources are appropriately used to improve the school environment as well as provide the means for departments to achieve their goals. The school's policies, operational procedures, allocation, and use of resources are very closely aligned with the educational agenda of the school.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

The school leadership reflects a clear commitment to empowering the school community to provide input to shape the school's direction. Each of the staff members with whom the team members spoke stated that he or she was fully supportive of the mission and vision of the school and its educational agenda.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

According to conversations of the Visiting Team with the principal and staff, the school accomplishes this through implementing its belief statements and providing a positive learning environment that allows opportunities for teacher and student collaboration. In addition, the staff is willing to devote additional time to collaborating and communicating about issues of relevance to the direction of the school.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

The staff maintains regular contact with parents through phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, e-mail, progress reports, website information, and newsletters, as needed. This contact is for both positive and critical feedback.

However, the school feels that it has work to do in this area. Currently, relationships have been forged with the local bowling alley, the local girls' and boys' clubs, and the local library.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The school is on the path toward establishing a culture of continuous learning and improvement. This effort is reflected in the action plan as well as the work of the teachers and the principal. The school principal is a doctoral student in educational leadership at the University of Phoenix. During winter and spring quarters, professional development classes were held at NewTyme on Creating and Maintaining a Learning Environment, as well as Instruction, Technology, Assessment, and Planning.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The leadership of the school fully supports the faculty, and the faculty appears to fully support the leadership. There appears to be a strong desire to do what is best for students. There is a disposition to openness toward addressing issues and concerns, as well as a focus on how the work of the school might be improved.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Standard I – Educational Program

This standard is met. NewTyme School's instructional and organizational practices, as well as its policies and procedures, support the desired results for student learning and prepare students to succeed in a culturally diverse, democratic society.

Standard II – Student Personnel Services

This standard is met. Student personnel services are designed to give systematic assistance to students.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard is met. The school plant provides for a variety of instructional activities and programs, and incorporates aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

This standard is met. The school library media program is a primary resource for literacy, information, and curriculum support. A certified library media teacher is available to consult the school as needed.

Standard V – Records

This standard is met. Student records are maintained, handled, and protected in the best interests of students and parents. Students and parents have the right to access personal student records and are ensured the privacy of such, as guaranteed by federal legislation.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard is met. The school improvement plan focuses on the total school rather than each of the separate components within the school.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard is met. All teachers are in compliance with the licensing requirements of the state of Utah and proper endorsements for the subjects assigned.

Standard VIII – Administration

This standard is met. The administration of NewTyme School provides educational leadership, supervises and coordinates programs, and carries out the necessary administrative procedures.

Standard IX – Teacher Load

This standard is met. The total number of students instructed by any teacher is within the standard set by the Utah State Office of Education and/or Northwest.

Standard X – Activities

This standard is met. NewTyme School supports a range of activities that supplement the basic instructional program by providing additional interests and opportunities for learning to take place.

Standard XI – Business Practices

This standard is met. The school is financially responsible. Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds. The school's advertising and promotional literature are completely truthful and ethical.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The action plan currently addresses several major concerns identified by the staff. These concerns accurately address critical areas for improvement, but are focused on organizational aspects rather than clearly addressing instructional and assessment strategies related to the DRSLs.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

The administrators, as well as members of the teaching staff, share a strong commitment to the action plan. The faculty is aware of the school's DRSLs and the impact that implementing the DRSLs will have on classroom instruction and assessment. The administration has the commitment of the staff to implement the action plan and Visiting Team recommendations.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be?*

The action plans currently do not go much beyond the need for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's improvement plan. In order to evaluate the plans' effectiveness, the leadership still needs to identify what data/evidence should be collected and periodically analyzed by the team/faculty.

The Visiting Team suggests incremental benchmarks and analyses of how the data from the findings affected instructional strategies, instructional delivery, and curriculum content.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the individualized curricular approach to meeting individual student needs first; it is effectively employed. Students were observed to be enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the school activities. There is ample evidence of quality documentation of student progress relative to the school's program standards.

- The Visiting Team commends the staff and administration for their conscious and diligent efforts in creating a positive culture and climate conducive to teaching and learning.
- The Visiting Team commends the staff and administration for continued efforts in identifying the needs of students, and in creating a positive community climate and culture. This culture includes providing a safe learning environment, holding high expectations for student learning, and having a staff characterized by caring educators willing to do whatever is necessary to help students succeed.
- The Visiting Team commends the staff members on a sincere effort to conduct a candid self-study of the school, and to use this process to identify improvement efforts on behalf of the students and parents they serve.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that NewTyme School continue to seek innovative ways of increasing opportunities for teachers to collaborate for the purpose of staff development, sharing best practices and implementing the school's action plan.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit its action plan. The four School Improvement Goals cited are well-stated and important to the ongoing development of the viability of the school. However, they are "organizational" in nature and could be consolidated as an organizational improvement plan. There should be greater focus on the implementation of indicators and assessments for the DRSLs as the central thrust for professional development over the next several years. Therefore, the faculty should work collectively to address how it will teach and assess the school's DRSLs. The faculty should develop a means of evaluating student work relative to the DRSLs by identifying the indicators and establishing the standards for students' demonstration of the DRSLs, in order to determine the extent to which the students manifest the learner outcomes.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the action plan include a timeline of long- and short-term goals, with realistic interim goals and dates for implementation and completion. The plan ought to be reviewed and revised as needed to reflect the results of continuous data collection and analysis by the faculty.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school avail itself more fully of the electronic resources available to Utah students (e.g., Pioneer—Utah's online library, electronic portfolios, the Electronic High School, etc.).